

Message Text

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14

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-03

RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 IO-13 JUSE-00 SNM-02 SY-10

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R 010750Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6873

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY PARIS

DEA WASHDC

UNCLAS BELGRADE 3443

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SNAR YO

SUBJ: PRESS REPORTS OF LARGE DRUG SEIZURES IN YUGOSLAVIA

1. DURING COURTESY CALL ON CHIEF OF DEPT FOR SUPPRESSION OF CRIMINALITY, FEDERAL INTERIOR SECRETARIAT (MISIC), EMBASSY NARCOTICS CONTROL COORDINATOR RAISED SUBJECT OF TANJUG ARTICLE DATED NIS, JULY 30 WHICH APPEARED JULY 31 POLITIKA AND OTHER LOCAL PAPERS. ARTICLE REPORTS DRUG SEIZURES AMOUNTING TO 1000 KG FIRST HALF OF THIS YEAR AND DESTRUCTION OF 700 KG OF CONFISCATED DRUGS, BUT NOTES ESTIMATES OF "EXPERTS" THAT 2 TONS OF HEROIN AND OTHER DRUGS SUCCESSFULLY SMUGGLED THROUGH BALKANS TO WESTERN EUROPE. WHILE REFERENCE MADE TO WARFARE AGAINST SMUGGLING BEING WAGED WITH DOGS, SPECIALLY TRAINED CUSTOMS OFFICERS, ETC. IN DISCOVERY WELL-HIDDEN CACHES, ARTICLE WINDS UP WITH CALL FOR STIFFER PENALTIES THAN PRESENT ONES WHICH CHARACTERIZED AS NOT COMENSURATE WITH PROFITS TO BE MADE OR DANGERS TO SOCIETY INHERENT IN NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING.

2. MISIC CONFIRMED DESTRUCTION OF LARGE QUANTITY OF CONFISCATED HASHISH, PROBABLY ABOUT 700 KG BY BURNING AT THE THERMO-ELECTRIC POWER PLANT AT KOSTOLAC. HE DESCRIBED THE OTHER TWO STATISTICS IN THE ARTICLE, RE AMOUNT OF DRUGS SEIZED THIS YEAR AND THAT SMUGGLED, UNCLASSIFIED

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AS PURE FANTASY. HE AND HIS DEPUTY (VUKMIROVIC) REMEMBERED THAT

SOMETHING LESS THAN 800 KG OF DRUGS WERE CONFISCATED DURING ALL OF 1972 (AND PROMISED PRECISE FIGURES LATER). MISIC WONDERED HOW ANYONE COULD ESTIMATE THE AMOUNT OF DRUGS ACTUALLY GETTING THROUGH, NOTING THAT IF HE HAD THE INFORMATION TO ARRIVE AT THAT FIGURE HE WOULD ALSO HAVE A BETTER CHANCE OF INTERCEPTING MORE. HE CONCURRED WITH THE ARTICLE'S ADVOCATION OF MORE SEVERE PUNISHMENT FOR NARCOTICS VIOLATIONS, NOTING THAT THE NEW LAW (BELGRADE 3388) WOULD PROVIDE THE LEGISLATIVE BASIS FOR THE COURTS TO TAKE FIRMER ACTION.

3. COMMENT: TANJUG ITEM IS LATEST OF SEVERAL NEWSPAPER ARTICLES ANNOUNCING NEW NARCOTICS LAW AND EMPHASIZING DANGER OF DRUGS TO INDIVIDUALS AND SOCIETY. THEY CLEARLY REFLECT YUGOSLAV CONCERN OVER PROBLEM. MOST OF THESE ARTICLES HAVE APPEARED IN POPULAR BELGRADE AFTERNOON TABLOID, POLITIKA EKSPRES (2ND LARGEST DAILY IN COUNTRY), WHICH IS GOOD VEHICLE FOR REACHING LARGE SEGMENT OF POPULATION MOST LIKELY TO INCLUDE PRESENT AND POTENTIAL DRUG USERS.
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